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FM AMEMBASSY TBILISI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2229

INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

RHMFIS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC

RUEANFA/NRC WASHINGTON DC

RHMFIIU/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS TBILISI 001760

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [PARM](#) [GG](#)

SUBJECT: GEORGIA: MINISTER EXPRESSES GRATITUDE FOR U.S.  
COOPERATION IN NUCLEAR AND RADIATION SAFETY

REF: TBILISI 0019

11. Summary. USG agencies and programs provide significant assistance to the Government of Georgia in the fields of nonproliferation, as well as nuclear and radiation safety. This assistance is provided by several different programs of the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA), the Export Control and Related Border Security program (EXBS), Georgia Border Security and Law Enforcement program (GBSLE), the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), and others. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources George Khachidze recently sent letters thanking the United States for this assistance, one addressed to the Ambassador and one to NRC Chairman Jaczko. End summary.

12. In the first letter, the Minister thanks the Ambassador for the recent donation of scientific equipment and vehicles by EXBS to the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Service (NRSS) of the Ministry. This equipment will be used by a western branch office of NRSS currently being established in Poti (reftel). The establishment of this office was recommended in the Joint Action Plan to Combat Nuclear Smuggling signed between the USG and Government of Georgia in 2007 and will allow the NRSS to more quickly respond to and control incidents involving nuclear and radioactive material that occur in western Georgia. The letter also expresses gratitude to the U.S. for all assistance provided in nuclear safety, stating that "as a result of the cooperation with the U.S. Department of State, Department of Energy, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other U.S. institutions, the regulatory control and response capacity of Georgian Government agencies in this field has substantially improved over the past few years, thus approaching the level necessary to implement accepted standards as well as to comply with our international obligations in this area." The Minister further assures the United States that the Ministry "will take necessary steps to facilitate full implementation of the existing bilateral agreements by the Government of Georgia, including the 2007 agreement."

13. The second letter is addressed to NRC Chairman Dr. Gregory Jaczko, congratulating him on his appointment, outlining the history of regulatory control over radiation sources in Georgia after the fall of the Soviet Union, and thanking the NRC for assistance provided in nonproliferation and nuclear safety over the past several years. The letter details the following results of this assistance, including "completion of country-wide inventory of radiation sources...development of the National Registry of the radiation sources...increased cooperation with the regulated community that resulted in licensing of more than 100 user organizations so far...relocation of 826 radiation sources to the Interim Storage Facility in Mtskheta from poorly secured locations in Georgia...drafting of the new framework Law on the Nuclear and Radiation Safety (to be submitted to the Georgian

Parliament soon) and development of the several basic regulations for safe use of radiation sources." The Minister also thanks NRC for the workshop it conducted in Tbilisi in June that described NRC's physical protection requirements. He expressed appreciation for NRC's support in establishing a NRSS office in Poti. The Minister further points out that "it is important that the U.S. NRC program approach gives due consideration to the integration of our activities with that of our neighbors and colleagues from several countries of former Soviet Union that participate in similar regulatory activities."

4. Copies of these letters have been emailed to EU/CARC, DOE/NNSA, and NRC/OIP.  
LOGSDON